

Volunteers in Parks

How You Can Help

Get involved today!

Volunteers are playing an ever-increasing role in California's parks. Volunteers serve in almost all of California's state park units and lend invaluable assistance in one or more of the following program areas:

Interpretation for Visitors

Docents are highly trained volunteers who interpret for visitors the cultural, natural and recreational resources of state parks. Docents receive initial and continuing training to which they add their unique approach and experiences. Interpretive activities that docents become involved with include:

Education Programs for school groups

Tours, Nature Hikes, Train Rides

Living History Programs and Demonstrations

Public Contact

Visitor Center Volunteers answer questions and provide information to visitors at park entrances or visitor centers.

Public Safety

Horseback, Mountain Bike, Foot, Boat, and All-Terrain Vehicle Patrols are conducted by volunteers who provide information and assistance.

Off-Highway Vehicle Patrols in State Vehicle Recreation Areas provide safety information, first aid and emergency assistance on a regular basis and during special off-road racing events.

Park Operations

Campground and Park Hosts are visible representatives in California State Parks' campgrounds and day-use areas. Volunteer duties include assisting visitors, collecting fees, performing light janitorial and maintenance duties, conducting interpretive programs, and encouraging compliance with park rules and regulations (although hosts do not perform actual law enforcement duties). Hosts may also perform a multitude of other duties to help the park. Most parks require a minimum commitment of three months, with a maximum stay of six months per park. For more information about being a campground host, click [here](#).

Park Equipment Maintenance is provided by volunteers with special training and expertise.

Park Administration includes duties such as clerical support, data tabulation, special events, and other administrative functions.

Natural Resource Management is a critical issue facing state parks.

Volunteers assist by providing needed skills and abilities in:

Trail Construction and Maintenance

Native Plant Enhancement

Exotic Plant Removal

Habitat Restoration

Beach Cleanup

Cultural Resource Management volunteers assist in preserving and protecting the many artifacts within the State Parks collection. From paintings to carriages, California's past comes alive through the efforts of talented volunteers who assist park staff in duties such as:

Caring for Collections

Historical Research

And much, much more...!

How to Become a California State Parks Volunteer

Qualifications

As a volunteer, you must be willing and able to carry out your assigned duties and responsibilities. You must also be reliable and committed. Job duties are matched to the interests and abilities of the volunteer. A medical examination or criminal background check may be required. Persons under 18 years of age may volunteer with written permission from a parent or guardian.

Training and Working Conditions

If selected, you will receive training to acquaint you with the park and your specific duties. Hours for most volunteer positions are flexible and varied, depending upon park needs and your availability. The amount of time volunteered is mutually agreed upon by you and your supervisor before you start and may be changed as circumstances dictate.

How to Apply

If you would like to receive a volunteer packet, please contact (916) 653-9069 or vipp@parks.ca.gov and leave your name and address. The packet contains application forms and information about each of the parks. You may volunteer as an individual or as part of a group, on short-term projects of 1 to 3 days, or on long-term projects in specialized programs. After locating the district or park(s) in which you would like to work, please contact their volunteer coordinator to ask about current volunteer opportunities and the address to which you should mail your completed application. You may, of course, apply to more than one park. Describe on the application any relevant experience, education, talents, skills and interests you possess. Each park has its own needs and will be looking for volunteers with the ability to accomplish certain tasks. The more specific you are, the easier it will be for the coordinator to locate a volunteer position that meets your needs and those of the park.